

MINUTES OF THE JOINT HOUSE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM/SENATE
COMMERCE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Senator Nick Jordan at 3:30 P.M. on January 30, 2008 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All House members were present except:

Owen Donohoe- excused
Gary Hayzlett- excused
Broderick Henderson- excused

Committee staff present:

Kathie Sparks, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Ryan Hoffman, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jason Long, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Matt Todd, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Ann Deitcher, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Jason Long, Asst. Revisor, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Rob Canton, PriceWaterhouseCoopers
Dick Carter, Travel Industry Assoc. Of Kansas
Bob Lancaster
Mike Taylor, KCK/Wyandotte County Unified Gov
John Myers, Myers Consulting
Stephen Koranda, Stephen Koranda & Assoc.
Barbara Nelson, Strecker Nelson Art Gallery
Suzan Barnes, Grand Central Hotel
Donna Price, Northwest Kansas Tourism Region
Linda Craghead, Flinthills Tourism Coalition
Jerry Cook, Overland Park CVB

The Chair introduced Jason Long who offered a briefing of **SB 501**. (Attachment 1). An overview of the bill was offered explaining that its purpose was to transfer the powers, duties and functions of the Department of Commerce's Division of Travel and Tourism Development to the KTC and abolishes that division within the department. The bill also creates various funding sources for the KTC and abolishes other tourism programs.

Questions and answers followed.

Next on the agenda was Rob Canton who gave a power point presentation overview on the case for change; what Kansas would accomplish with more funding and what organization was the right one to lead these efforts. (Attachment 2).

Questions and answers followed.

Dick Carter spoke to the Committee regarding the final work product of the Kansas Tourism Initiative taskforce and the recommendations that would shape the way to approach tourism promotion and development in Kansas in the future. (Attachment 3).

Questions and answers followed.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Economic Development and Tourism Committee at 3:30 P.M. on January 30, 2008 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

Offering testimony in support of the Kansas Tourism Initiative, was Robert Lancaster who told the Committee that Kansas ranked 48th of the 50 states in tourism support and how the surrounding states greatly exceeded Kansas in their commitment to tourism. ([Attachment 4](#)).

Mike Taylor told the Committee that his organization supports the Kansas Tourism initiative and urges the State of Kansas to enact a comprehensive tourism plan and increase funding of tourism promotion and marketing. ([Attachment 5](#)).

John Myers spoke of the Visit Kansas/Kansas Tourism Initiative saying what they were considering was a visionary plan that focused on strengthening the industry, promoting and marketing it at a more appropriate level and increasing the industry's Return On Investment in the form of employment, business revenue and local and state tax revenue. ([Attachment 6](#)).

Appearing next was Stephen Koranda who spoke of the Kansas Tourism Initiative not as a proposal to assist merely the hotels, restaurants and museums but to grow the tourism economy. The proposal was to grow the Kansas economy. ([Attachment 7](#)).

He said that PriceWaterhouse estimated the proposed initiative would have a return of \$260 million to the Kansas economy.

Barbara Nelson told what she saw as the potential for the Kansas Tourism Initiative which was an opportunity for the Kansas tourism industry to promote Kansas in an integrated manner, to potential tourists, whether passing through, Kansans traveling in their own home state or coming to Kansas as a destination. ([Attachment 8](#)).

Offering testimony in support of the Kansas Tourism Initiative was Suzan Barnes. ([Attachment 9](#)). She said she felt it was critical that we recognize the importance of our state's scenic beauty to the economic well-being of our communities through tourism opportunities.

Donna Price told the Committee that the mission statement of the Northwest Kansas Travel Council, Inc. read, "Committed to the Promotion and Development of Travel in Northwest Kansas. ([Attachment 10](#)). She said that their vision for promoting tourism went well beyond just the northwest part of the state. They believed that the state of Kansas had just scratched the surface on what it could accomplish by increasing promotion of the many things that Kansas had to offer.

Speaking in favor of the Kansas Tourism Initiative, Linda Craghead she felt that we must dare to change from the "what has been" to the "what could be" and to create a system that encourages us to think regionally, to set aside our selfishness and unify our efforts regardless of our municipality, party affiliation or our individual motives. ([Attachment 11](#)).

Gerald Cook appeared in support of the Kansas Tourism Initiative and the creation of a new statewide tourism organization: "Visit Kansas". ([Attachment 12](#)). He said he believed that "Visit Kansas" would provide our best opportunities to invest our resources wisely, rather than continue as a subset within a department of state government.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Economic Development and Tourism Committee at 3:30 P.M. on January 30, 2008 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

Offering written only testimony (Attachments 13 - 31) were: Marci Penner - Kansas Sampler Foundaton; Bridgett Jobe - KCK/Wyandotte County CVB; Anna Methvin - Southeast Kansas Tourism Region & Chanute Area C of C; LeAnn Cox - Hutchinson CVB; Clauddia Larkin - Freebird Business Solutions; Janet Bean - Fick Fossil Museum; Nita Jones - Sedan, Kansas; Katie Casper - Ft. Scott Kansas C of C; Mary Arlington - Kansas Assoc. Of RV Parks & Campgrounds; Connie Hachenberg/Charles Gregor - Leavenworth Chamber & Leavenworth CVB; Don Saylor - Ks Restaurant & Hospitality Assoc.; Amy Finney - Little House on the Prairie; John Rolfe - Greater Wichita CVB; Michael Phipps - Hilton Wichita Airport Conference Ctr.; Sylvia Rice - Visit Salina; Marlee Carpenter - KCCI; Susan Henderson, Lawrence Convention & Visitors Bureau; Kathleen Taylor-Olsen - KBA; Gloria Moore, Washington County Tourism.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm. The next regular meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Thursday, January 31, 2008.